

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9456  
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE  
USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4315

E. O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SHUM, CI  
SUBJECT: HUNGER STRIKE APPEARS OVER

REF: SANTIAGO 4287

1. SUMMARY: THE BISHOPS ISSUED A DECLARATION THE NIGHT OF JUNE 6 CALLING FOR AN END TO THE HUNGER STRIKE AND SAYING THAT THE GOC HAS AGREED TO PROVIDE CLARIFICATION IN THOSE CASES WHERE A DISAPPEARANCE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED BY COMPETENT AUTHORITY AND THE RELATIVES SO REQUEST. THE RELATIVES GROUP PUT OUT A STATEMENT THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 7 AGREEING TO END THE STRIKE BUT SAYING THAT THE STRIKERS WOULD REMAIN IN CHURCHES AND OFFICES FOR MEDICAL REASONS. A LONGER DECLARATION IS PROMISED FOR TONIGHT. IT WAS WIDELY REPORTED EARLIER TODAY THAT INTERIOR MINISTER FERNANDEZ WOULD ALSO ISSUE A DECLARATION THIS AFTERNOON. HE HAD NOT DONE SO AS OF 1700 HOURS. IN AN ACTION RELATED TO THE STRIKE SOME 200 UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WERE ARRESTED THIS MORNING AND ARE NOW BEING RELEASED. THE INITIAL REACTION TO THE APPARENT ENDING OF THE STRIKE IS MIXED. THE RELATIVES ARE FAR FROM SATISFIED BUT, APPARENTLY, WERE CONVINCED THAT NO MORE WAS POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE BISHOPS' DECLARATION OF THE NIGHT OF JUNE 6 WAS SUBSTANTIALLY ALTERED FROM WHAT WE WERE TOLD AT NOON (AND REPORTED REFTTEL). IT CONTAINED LESS ON WHAT THE CHURCH WOULD DO AND MORE ON WHAT THE GAC HAS UNDERTAKEN -- AS TOLD BY INTERIOR MINISTER FERNANDEZ TO CARDINAL SILVZ AND BISHOP VALENZUELA. THE KEY SENTENCES ARE: "THE MINISTER EXPRESSED THE WILL OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE CLEAR WITHIN A SHORT TIME PERIOD (EN BREVE PLAZO) THE FATE OF

EACH PERSON WHOSE DISAPPEARANCE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED(ACREDITADO) BEFORE A RESPONSIBLE ENTITY (ORGANISMO) AND WHOSE RELATIVES SO REQUEST. IN ADDITION THE MINISTER DESIRES, BY MEANS OF LEGISLATION, TO RESOLVE THE JURIDICAL PROBLEMS IMPLICIT IN THIS SITUATION".

3. IN PRECEDING PORTIONS OF THE FOUR-POINT DECLARATION THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE OF BISHOPS (OF WHICH CARDINAL SILVA IS A MEMBER) MADE CLEAR THE LONG-TERM AND CONTINUING SUPPORT OF THE CHURCH FOR THE CLARIFICATION OF THE STATUS/FATE OF THE MISSING PERSONS (A MORAL IMPERATIVE), PRAISED THE STRIKERS FOR THEIR SACRIFICES TO BRING THE MATTER BEFORE NATIONAL AND WORLD PUBLIC OPINION, AND CALLED UPON THE RELATIVES AND OTHERS TO PUT AN END TO THE HUNGER STRIKE.

4. IN MID-AFTERNOON JUNE 7 THE RELATIVES GROUP PUT OUT A BRIEF STATEMENT ACKNOWLEDGING THE BISHOPS' DECLARATION AND STATING:

-- THAT WE AGREE, BASED ON THE WORD OF THE CHURCH, TO SUSPEND THE HUNGER STRIKE AS OF 12 NOON JUNE 7, BUT THAT THE STRIKERS WILL REMAIN WHERE THEY ARE FOR MEDICAL REASONS.

-- THE RELATIVES WHO CARRIED OUT THE STRIKE, AS WELL AS ALL OTHERS WHO ACTIVELY SUPPORTED US, AFTER 17 DAYS OF FASTING, ARE IN A SERIOUS STATE OF HEALTH BUT WITH UNALTERED DETERMINATION AND MORALE.

-- IN THE NEXT FEW HOURS THE RELATIVES WILL ISSUE A PUBLIC DECLARATION WITH A FULL EXPRESSION OF OUR VIEWS.

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5. THE MEDIA TODAY HAS BEEN PROMISING A DECLARATION BY INTERIOR MINISTER FERNANDEZ. AT ONE TIME WE WERE TOLD THAT A WRITTEN STATEMENT WOULD BE AVAILABLE AT DIEGO PORTALES AT 1430 HOURS. AS OF 1700 HOURS THERE HAD BEEN NO WORD FROM THE GOC ON EITHER THE BISHOPS' DECLARATION OF JUNE 6 OR THE RELATIVES GROUP STATEMENT OF THIS AFTERNOON.

6. IN A RELATED ACTION, SOME 200 UNIVERSITY STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED PEACEFULLY THIS MORNING IN SUPPORT OF THE HUNGER STRIKERS AND WERE ARRESTED BY THE CARABINEROS. THERE WAS NO REPORTED VIOLENCE AND REPORTEDLY ALL ARE NOW BEING RELEASED.

7. COMMENT: THE CARDINAL AND OTHERS CLOSE TO THE SITUATION EXPRESS CONFIDENCE THAT THE STRIKE IS OVER. NEVERTHELESS THE TEST OF WILL BETWEEN THE STRIKERS AND THE GOC MAY NOT BE ENTIRELY OVER. WHILE THERE ARE GOOD MEDICAL REASONS WHY AT LEAST SOME OF THE STRIKERS SHOULD NOT TRY TO LEAVE THE STRIKE LOCALES UNTIL THEY HAVE RECOVERED SOME STRENGTH, THE RELATIVES GROUP MAY ALSO HOPE THAT THE GOC WILL FIRST COME OUT WITH ITS DECLARATION CONFIRMING THE COMMITMENT CONTAINED IN THE BISHOPS' DECLARATION OF LAST NIGHT. HENCE, THE DELAY OF ONE OR EVEN TWO DAYS. THE GOC SAYS, FOR ITS PART, THAT THERE MUST FIRST BE A FORMAL END TO THE STRIKE, AND THERE IS

SOME REASON TO THINK THAT FERNANDEZ IS AWAITING THE DECLARATION  
PROMISED FOR LATER TONIGHT.

8. THE STRIKERS HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT THE FORMULA SET  
FORTH IN THE BISHOPS' DECLARATION -- BEYOND THE FACT THAT IT  
RESTS AS OF NOW SOLELY ON GOOD FAITH UNDERSTANDING. IT DOES  
NOT SPECIFY ANY TIME LIMIT, ALTHOUGH SAYING "WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD",  
AND THERE IS FEAR BY SOME THAT THE PRECISE WORDING OF THE GOC'S  
COMMITMENT COULD PERMIT VARIOUS LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUBTERFUGES  
ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD  
BY A LAWYER (WHO WAS ALSO CONTACTED BY THE VICARIATE) THAT THE  
PHRASE "WHOSE DISAPPEARANCE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED BEFORE A COMPETENT  
INTITY" WOULD APPLY TO MANY (AT LEAST HALF) OF THE DISAPPEARED  
PERSONS ON THE VICARIATE'S LIST OF 618.  
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